

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND PLANNING SERVICES STANDING
SCRUTINY PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2006
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.30 - 9.30 PM**

Members Present:	D Stallan (Chairman), Mrs M Boatman, Mrs D Borton, D Kelly, A Lee, P McMillan, T Richardson and Mrs P Smith
Other members present:	(none)
Apologies for Absence:	M Woollard and Mrs M Sartin
Officers Present	J Gilbert (Head of Environmental Services), J Preston (Head of Planning and Economic Development) and Z Folley (Democratic Services Assistant)

47. SUBSITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

It was noted that there were no substitute Members at this meeting.

48. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

49. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 1 DECEMBER 2005

The Head of Environmental Services reported that the Council's response to the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 had now been sent to DEFRA and made clear that its views were consistent with those of the County and the other participating Boroughs/Councils.

50. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel considered their terms of reference and work programme.

(a) Provision of Uniformed Wardens in the District

Noted that the Head of Environmental Services had met with Councillor Mrs J Whitehouse to map out her request for a review on the provision of uniformed wardens. The Councillor had indicated that she was carrying out her own research. The intention was to incorporate the financial implications within the 2007/08 budget. It was indicated that an initial report be formulated for a March 2006 meeting of the Panel.

The review would consider the powers available to Community Police Officers and whether they were empowered to undertake any of the additional powers introduced by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. It was agreed that a

representative of the Police be invited to consider this aspect at the March 2006 meeting.

ACTION:

- (1) Head of Environmental Services to produce initial report for Panel meeting in March 2006
- (2) That a Police representative be invited to the meeting.

(b) Re – Use of Buildings in the Green Belt – Initial feasibility study on vehicle movements

The Head of Planning and Economic Development reported on progress made with the study. Work on the investigation which was due to be reported in December 2005 had been delayed due to other work commitments. Contact had been made with Keith Lawson at Essex County Council. He had reported disquiet about the activities associated with the reuse of buildings in converted or protected rural lanes, a local major development, raised issues around green houses, changes in the regulations for Heavy Goods Vehicles and considered whether, in comparison to historical trends, activities had increased/decreased. Discussions with the Forward Planning Team had indicated that the investigation would need to comprise an evidence based framework to comply with the requirements of the New Local Development Scheme. This had not yet been completed. He stressed the need to act with the County and Local Agencies.

Keith Lawson had indicated that the County and Local Agencies as part of the Essex Planning Officer Study were undertaking a wider study into the issues to address them on a County basis. Should this constitute policy development, it would be subject to an environmental and sustainability strategic assessment and a substantial piece of work. The Nazeing area was of particular concern. Either option would need to be resourced. Members agreed that their review should be undertaken as part of this wider study as the issues were County wide. Noted that this preference could assist with the costs, the production of a proper evidence based study and should ensure work was subject to the identified strategic assessment. It was agreed that Keith Lawson be invited to the March 2006 meeting of the Panel where the matter would be considered further. It was envisaged that the work would be subject to consultation with local residents.

ACTION:

The Head of Planning and Economic Development to invite Keith Lawson of the Essex County Council Planning Services Department to the March 2006 meeting of the Panel.

(c) Local Development Scheme

The Head of Planning and Economic Development reported that should the scheme be agreed it would need to incorporate the outcome the East of England Plan. Work was being undertaken on the Council Plan on achievements so far, goals, smart targets and identified dates.

(d) East of England Plan

The Head of Planning and Economic Development reported that the Council's statements to date to the Examination in Public had been placed in the Members Room. This included the response to the Barker Review.

The key discussion for the District at the Examination would take place on 14 /15 February 2006 at Letchworth when matters affecting the area would be considered. Reference was made to the governments aims, recent announcements and the potential impact of the plans on the Essex economy. Agreed that Henry Stamp, the Principle Planning Officer for Forward Planning and/or Ivan Le - Gallais, (depending on availability), who were to attend the key meetings, be invited to the next meeting of the Panel on 28 February 2006 to report back on the discussions.

ACTION:

Head of Planning and Economic Development to invite the Principle Planning Officer for Forward Planning and/or Ivan Le - Gallais (depending on availability) to the next meeting of the Panel on 28 February 2006.

51. WEST ESSEX WASTE MANAGEMENT JOINT COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2005

The Panel received a summary of the decisions made by the Joint Committee on 30 November 2005. Reference was made to the Memorandum of Understanding. It was reported that this would need to be signed by April 2006.

52. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no reports to be made to the next Committee.

53. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Panel received the Outline Business Case for the Essex Waste Project Board. The Panel were asked to note the strategic context, existing service provision, the value for money analysis, the reference project, summary of key conclusions, project delivery, management and stakeholder engagement.

Noted that the documents indicated that North Weald Airfield had been identified as a potential location for a waste management plant. Noted that there would be scope within the Reference Case for the Contractor to make changes. Noted the reasons for the change from a three to a two area solution and waste disposal techniques and methods.

Several Members expressed an interest in visiting a recycling facility in the District. The Head of Planning and Economic Development agreed to look into this request and report back to the Members.

Agreed that the Reference Case be brought before the OSC and be a separate item on its agenda.

Agreed that Members should be kept informed about the process.

ACTION:

Head of Planning and Economic Services to explore Members request for a site visit to a recycling facility in the District and report back to the Panel.

54. FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted that next meeting would be held on 28 February 2006 at 7.30 p.m.

The following meeting would take place on 30 March 2006 at 7.30 p.m.